

Case Study 2: Navigating conflicting messages in preservice teacher school placement

In enacting social justice, teacher educators often encounter challenges that require thoughtful reflection and negotiation. These case studies, **based on real experiences of teacher educators** and **preservice teachers**, offer a space to reflect on these complexities. The guiding questions are designed to help you navigate and critically engage with these dilemmas. In this document you will see:

- 1) A **narrative** presenting the case study
- 2) Two **visual prompts** to complement the case study

Please use **both items in a way that best suits you and your context**. You could use them together or the narrative and the visual prompts separately. **You choose!**

Case Study 2: Navigating conflicting messages in preservice teacher school placement - *Narrative*

Pre-service teachers (PSTs) often face challenges when the guidance they receive from their supervising teachers conflicts with their own educational values. Sarah's practitioner inquiry focused on addressing gender inequity and sexism in education. During her school placement, she noticed that the physical education curriculum was differentiated by gender, with boys and girls receiving distinct content. This practice contradicted her beliefs, but she hesitated to challenge it. Feeling conflicted, Sarah realised the lack of support from the school staff but was unsure how to navigate the situation. Sarah found herself torn between her commitment to addressing sexism and the pressure to conform to the school's established practices: a conflicting space. With no guidance from the supervising teachers, she felt powerless. Recognising the need for support, Sarah considered reaching out to her teacher educator for advice on how to align her inquiry with the school context and effectively address these challenges.

Guiding questions:

- How can Sarah negotiate her practitioner inquiry on gender (sexism) with the cultural practices of her placement school?
- What strategies can Sarah use to seek support from her teacher educator when she feels her inquiry goals conflict with school culture?
- How can supervising teachers and teacher educators collaborate to better support PSTs like Sarah in negotiating conflicting messages in placements?



